

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10

IO-13 AGR-05 L-03 FRB-03 OMB-01 ITC-01 SP-02

USIA-06 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 OIC-02 EPG-02 SIL-01 STR-04 TRSE-00

CEA-01 /113 W

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R 031000Z JUN 77

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7903

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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USEEC USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UNCTAD, ETRD

SUBJECT: UNCTAD - RESULTS OF FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING ON

TROPICAL TIMBER

SUMMARY: INITIAL PROGRESS OF PREPARATORY WAS HAMPERED BY LATE AVAILABILITY IN WORKING LANGUAGES OF UNCTAD/FAO REPORT ON TROPICAL TIMBER. THE REPORT, HOWEVER, WAS ACTUALLY HELPFUL TO CONSUMERS, PAYING OBLIGATORY OBEISANCE TO POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF AN INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT FOR TROPICAL TIMBER BUT MAKING CLEAR THAT AVAILABLE DATA INSUFFICIENT TO SUPPORT A MEANINGFUL AGREEMENT. DESPITE AN EARLY CONSENSUS REGARDING THE NEED FOR FURTHER STUDY, MEETING BECAME DIFFICULT, WITH PRODUCERS HOLDING FIRM FOR WORDING IMPLYING AGREEMENT ON AN ACTION PROGRAM. PREPARATORY MEETING ASKED AD HOC IPC INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE TO SCHEDULE ANOTHER SESSION AND DECIDED TO CONTINUE ITS ACTIVITY AT LEVEL OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS, WHO ARE TASKED WITH PREPARING A WORK PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

1. PREPARATORY MEETING ON TROPICAL TIMBER BEGAN AT SNAIL'S PACE BECAUSE OF DOCUMENTATION PROBLEMS. UNCTAD/FAO REPORT WAS NOT MADE GENERALLY AVAILABLE UNTIL OPENING OF MEETING AND THEN ONLY IN ENGLISH. THE DOCUMENT WAS HOWEVER ACTUALLY HELPFUL TO CONSUMERS; WHILE MAKING THE CASE FOR POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF AN INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT ON TROPICAL TIMBER, IT REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR THAT MORE DATA AND INFORMATION WOULD HAVE TO BE GATHERED BEFORE ANY CONCLUSIONS COULD BE REACHED ABOUT A POSSIBLE AGREEMENT ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO PROSPECTS FOR PRICE STABILIZATION THROUGH STOCKPILING.
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2. AS RESULT OF DOCUMENTATION PROBLEMS, SUBSTANTIVE STATEMENTS WERE NOT MADE UNTIL THIRD DAY. AFRICANS, LED BY IVORY COAST (WHOSE DELEGATION HEADED BY MINISTER), WERE HANDICAPPED BY REPORT'S NON-AVAILABILITY IN FRENCH BUT MADE WELL ORGANIZED PITCH FOR INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT CUM BUFFER STOCK, INCREASED PROCESSING IN PRODUCER COUNTRIES, CODE OF CONDUCT OR REFORESTATION AND PROMOTION OF LESSER KNOWN SPECIES. ASIANS, LED BY MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA, STRUCK A MORE MODERATE STANCE. MALAYSIA EMPHASIZED NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT TO STABILIZE MARKETS BUT ALSO RECOGNIZED NEED FOR PRIOR IN-DEPTH STUDIES IN BASIC AREAS (PRICE INDICATION, MARKET INFORMATION, ACCESS TO CONSUMER COUNTRY MARKETS, TRANSPORT COSTS, PROCESSING AND PROMOTION).

3. FYI: UNCTAD SEMINARS ON TROPICAL TIMBER, HELD QUIETLY IN JAKARTA AND ABIDJAN IN APRIL, APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN FORMATION OF ASIAN AND AFRICAN

POSITIONS. STATEMENTS MADE BY IVORY COAST AND MALAYSIA
MIRRORED POINTS AND PHRASEOLOGY CONTAINED IN REPORTS OF
THE TWO SEMINARS, CIRCULATED AT OPENING OF PREPARATORY.
END FYI.

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ACTION EB-07

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INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
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4. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ASIANS AND AFRICANS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE DELAY IN TABLING OF DRAFT CONCLUSIONS BUT ON THIRD DAY PRODUCERS PRESENTED A JOINT PROPOSAL THAT CLOSELY REFLECTED POINTS MADE EARLIER BY MALAYSIA.

SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH PRODUCERS WERE CONDUCTED ENTIRELY BY INDONESIA, MALAYSIA AND THAILAND WITH

AFRICANS MAKING ONLY AN OCCASIONAL APPEARANCE BUT NO SUBSTANTIVE INTERVENTION. ASIANS THOUGHT PERHAPS AFRICANS STILL FELT HANDICAPPED BY LACK OF DOCUMENTATION IN FRENCH BUT ALSO SPECULATED THAT AFRICANS DECIDED ASIANS COULD PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS ONCE DRAFT HAD BEEN WORKED OUT AMONG PRODUCERS. COMMENT: ADDRESSEE POSTS IN AFRICA MAY WISH TO OBTAIN VIEWS OF PARTICIPANTS ON PROCEEDINGS AND OUTCOME AND VIEWS ON FUTURE WORK AT EXPERTS LEVEL. END COMMENT.

5. USDEL (ST. JOHN) TOOK LOW KEY APPROACH IN PLENARIES, MAKING ONE GENERALLY WORDED STATEMENT ALONG LINES OF POSITION PAPER, BUT ASSUMED ACTIVE ROLE IN CONSUMER CAUCUS AND CONTACT GROUP. FINLAND PLAYED ACTIVE ROLE AND WHILE OPENLY SUPPORTING PRINCIPAL OF MARKET STABILIZATION WAS STILL INSTRUMENTAL IN MAINTAINING CONSUMER UNITY. LDC PROCESSORS (SUCH AS KOREA, SINGAPORE, ISRAEL) FOLLOWED MEETINGS CLOSELY BUT TOOK NO ACTIVE PART IN DISCUSSIONS, CAUGHT BETWEEN INTERESTS AS PROCESSORS AND COMMITMENT TO G-77 SOLIDARITY.

6. CONTACT GROUP WORKED TWO DAYS LATE INTO EVENING AND REACHED AGREEMENT ON CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ONLY SHORTLY BEFORE FINAL PLENARY LATE FRIDAY NIGHT. WORK OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONTACT GROUP WAS DIFFICULT, WITH PRODUCERS HOLDING FIRM FOR BROADEST POSSIBLE DEFINITION OF TROPICAL TIMBER AND WORDING WHICH WOULD IMPLY THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON AN ACTION PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE STABLE MARKET CONDITIONS. CONSUMERS SUCCEEDED IN MODERATING LANGUAGE ALTHOUGH JAPAN, BECAUSE OF ITS DOMESTIC POLICIES ON TIMBER PRODUCTS, MADE A QUALIFYING STATEMENT TO EFFECT THAT

TROPICAL TIMBER COVERS PRODUCTS ALSO.

7. IN FINAL DOCUMENT PREPCOM REQUESTS IPC'S AD HOC COMMITTEE TO SCHEDULE A FURTHER SESSION ("IF POSSIBLE, NOT LATER THAN NOVEMBER 1977") AND DECIDES TO CONTINUE PREPARATORY'S WORK AT LEVEL OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS "TO PREPARE AND RECOMMEND A WORK PROGRAM". LIST OF OBJECTIVES FOR WORK PROGRAM RUNS THE GAMUT OF ALL THE ISSUES FACING TROPICAL TIMBER. THESE OBJECTIVES ARE A MIXTURE OF OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES FROM RESOLUTION 93(IV) ADAPTED TO TROPICAL TIMBER AND EXPERTS GROUP WILL ESSENTIALLY HAVE TO BEGIN FROM SCRATCH IN DEVELOPING ITS WORK PROGRAM.

8. CONSUMERS MADE AJOINT STATEMENT, AFTER APPROVAL OF TEXT, ON FOUR ASPECTS:

A) MARKET - IN THE PARAGRAPH WHICH SETS OUT THE OBJECTIVE QUOTE TO ACCOMPLISH STABLE MARKET CONDITIONS IN THE TRADE IN TROPICAL TIMBER UNQUOTE MARKET ENCOMPASSES ALL OF THE FUNCTIONS IN THE TRADE, I.E., NOT JUST PRICE.

B) THE MTN IS THE PROPER FORUM TO SEEK IMPROVEMENT OF MARKET ACCESS.

C) BECAUSE OF THE MIXTURE OF OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES FROM 93 (IV) CONSUMERS WANTED IT UNDERSTOOD THAT THE OBJECTIVES IN THE RECOMMENDATIONS DO NOT I ANY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WAY OVERRIDE OR SUPPLEMENT RESOLUTION 93 (IV).

D) CONSUMERS WERE DISAPPOINTED THAT DESPITE CONSENSUS ON FURTHER WORK EARLY IN WEEK EXERCISE HAD TURNED INTO AN ATTEMPT TO EXPAND ON OR RE-NEGOTIATE 93 (IV). SORENSON

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Message Attributes

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Concepts: TROPICAL PRODUCTS, REPORTS, MEETINGS
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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TAGS: ETRD, UNCTAD, EEC
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